



Leading Manufacturing Journalist Thomas R. Cutler Discusses Size of Lean Market including e-kanban

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Size of Lean Market including e-kanban Discussed by Leading Manufacturing Journalist Thomas R. Cutler

PR9.NET September 19, 2005 - Cutler provided a detailed history of the lean manufacturing marketing including how e-kanban solutions are central to an effective lean manufacturing initiative. According to Matthew Marotta, founder of Datacraft Solutions, "We do not charge for upgrades to the system as we learn about new best practices that clients ask us to incorporate. Before Datacraft incorporates the request, it is reviewed by a lean advisory board to validate the value of the best practices and the value added impact upon our partner community. Once it is passed, they develop, test, and implement."

The hosted solution provides the customer with their own set of servers which are maintained offsite by an outsourced set of administrators. All of the administration fees, equipment, support teams and software updates are all included in the monthly service fee which is less than the cost of hiring an internal system administrator.

The value of an ASP is that manufacturers can buy "by the drink", low risk, and see a rapid ROI. Only internet access is required.

The non-ASP option leaves manufacturers investing a large sum into the communication network, IT personnel, IT training, application servers, consulting for system modification, along with all the hidden costs that come with it. The only disadvantage of using an ASP is the client never owns the system (application), only their own data. This concern tends to be the issue of IT since they want to control all phases of the e-kanban operation. The cost of the control is wasteful and completely antithetical to a Lean Initiative.

While some ERP systems QAD, Factory Logic, and Supply Works have some e-kanban functionality is not their core focus, so manufacturers are purchasing the ERP system at a significant price tag including all the price increases (and upgrade charges). From the perspective of Lean functionality and immediate ROI the cost cannot be justified, unless there is a plan for a manufacturer to replace the ERP system.

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